

BOOK REVIEWS



THE HYGIENE OF TRANSMISSIBLE DISEASES, THEIR CAUSATION, MODES OF DISSEMINATION, AND METHODS OF PREVENTION. By A. C. Abbott, M.D., Professor of Hygiene and Bacteriology, and Director of the Laboratory of Hygiene, University of Pennsylvania. Second edition, revised and enlarged, with forty-six illustrations and twenty charts. W. B. Saunders & Company, Philadelphia and London, 1901.

This volume of three hundred and fifty pages has reached a second edition and should be in the hands of all nurses. The opening section treats of the influence of age, sex, race, occupation, density of population, heredity, and season upon diseases in general; and of chemical, physical, mechanical, parasitic, and bacterial agencies as the intermediate causes of the development of diseases. This portion of the work is characterized by a philosophical tone and a clearness of description which render it of great value. One is led to classify and to rearrange his conceptions of the causation of disease when reading it.

The section which follows treats of the commoner transmissible diseases, like typhoid fever, tuberculosis, dysentery, diphtheria, and other similar diseases, and the account of the bacteriology of these affections is full and easily to be understood. The author has not sacrificed his scientific descriptions to an attempt to be popular and, on the other hand, he has not obscured the subject by an ill-timed attempt to be technical. Whoever wishes to know of the role played by bacteria in the production of disease will acquire here accurate and satisfactory knowledge.

An excellent example of the author's method of imparting the latest word of science upon any disease is afforded by his treatment of the relation of malaria to mosquitoes. He not only clearly describes the part played by the mosquito as an intermediate host for the malarial organism, but also refers the reader to the latest literature of the subject.

The final section of the volume considers the whole subject of prophylaxis against infectious diseases, and gives a résumé of what is known as to immunity, both natural and acquired, vaccination, and protective inoculation, and quotes with approval the declaration of Welch, "that the problems relating to immunity and infection have been in part at least removed from the realm of pure hypothesis and placed in a position favorable to exact experimental solution."

The chapters on disinfection deal with special chemical disinfection by means of sulphur dioxide, formaldehyde, milk of lime, carbolic acid, and the various coal-tar products. For the production of formaldehyde gas he does not speak favorably of the effects of the evaporation of wood alcohol over the ordinary lamp, but prefers the use of formalin to which ten per cent. of glycerine has been added in a generator after the Novy and Waite pattern,—that is, a simple copper retort in which the formalin-glycerine mixture may be placed, and the gas disengaged by heat may be conveyed through a tube into the room to be disinfected. The specific directions given for disinfecting rooms, discharges, vaults, stables, wells, and cisterns are most explicit and useful. As would be expected of

a bacteriologist, the author regards heat in one form or another, preferably in the vehicle of steam under pressure, as the most efficient and manageable germicide, although he describes and recommends other methods for special uses.

There is added a chapter on the precautions to be taken in the management of communicable diseases which contains definite and specific instructions for isolation and disinfection of clothing, apartments, and discharges. Nurses and others who have to do with infectious diseases and the problems of isolation and disinfection should be familiar with this book, which contains upon almost every page information of vital importance.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SETTLEMENTS. Compiled by Mrs. Caroline W. Montgomery for the College Settlements Association. To be obtained from the Secretary, Miss Mabel G. Curtis, 829 Boylston Street, Boston. Price, ten cents.

Those interested in the settlement movement and desirous of informing themselves as to its spread and scope will find this book valuable and instructive, as it gives the names and addresses of all the settlements in the country up to date, with an outline of the work attempted and the special features characteristic of each.

BOOKS TO READ TO PATIENTS

"A HOUSE-PARTY" is a collection of anonymous short stories edited by Paul Leicester Ford. A list of authors is appended, and the reader is invited to fit the stories and the authors together. While the book is amusing and some of the stories very well told and good for reading aloud, few show the individual touch, and with one or two exceptions the book might easily have been the work of a single writer.

"OLD TIME GARDENS," by Alice Morse Earle, is another of the charming Macmillan books. It seemed as if garden literature had been perhaps overdone, but here is one of the most complete books on the subject. Surely few Americans know of the abundance of beautiful and stately gardens in this country. The sketches of some of these indicate that they rival even the beautiful old English gardens, and at this time, with gardening catalogues blossoming in every mail, it is safe to say that many a new garden will be modelled upon the lines of some of these most lovable old ones.

L. D. D.

